

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A waist belt for supporting a disposable absorbent assembly, the belt having a longitudinal centerline, a transverse centerline, a wearer-facing surface, an opposing surface, two end edges oppositely disposed with respect to the transverse centerline, and two side edges oppositely disposed with respect to the longitudinal centerline;

the belt comprising a central segment, at least two intermediate segments and at least two distal segments;

the central segment being positioned along the longitudinal centerline and extending transversely outwardly from the longitudinal centerline ~~in~~ on either side of the longitudinal centerline, the central segment having a first longitudinal length defined by the distance between the end edges of the central segment;

each intermediate segment transversely outwardly extending from the central segment and being positioned between the central segment and a distal segment, each intermediate segment covering a side hip of the wearer when the belt is worn, each intermediate segment having a second longitudinal length defined by the distance between the end edges of each intermediate segment;

each distal segment extending transversely outwardly from an intermediate segment and including one of the side edges of the belt, each distal segment having a third longitudinal length defined by the distance between the end edges of each distal segment;

wherein the second longitudinal length is greater than the first longitudinal length, and greater than the third longitudinal length; and

wherein the belt comprises a fastener element positioned on at least one of the distal segments for releasably securing the belt around the waist of the wearer, and an attachment surface formed at least on the opposing surface of each intermediate segment for releasably attaching the disposable assembly to the belt.

2. (Original) A waist belt according to Claim 1 wherein the attachment surface for releasably attaching the absorbent assembly to the belt is formed on the opposing surfaces of the intermediate segments and the distal segments.

3. (Original) A waist belt according to Claim 1 wherein the attachment surface for releasably attaching the absorbent assembly to the belt is formed on the opposing surfaces of the intermediate segments and the central segment.

4. (Original) A waist belt according to Claim 1 wherein the second longitudinal length of the intermediate segment is between 100 mm and 250 mm if the belt is designed for adult wearers.

5. (Original) A waist belt according to Claim 1 wherein the second longitudinal length of the intermediate segment is between 50 mm and 100 mm if the belt is designed for infant wearers.

6. (Currently Amended) An absorbent article having a longitudinal centerline, a transverse centerline, a wearer-facing surface and an opposing surface;

the absorbent article comprising:

- a disposable absorbent assembly comprising a liquid pervious topsheet, a liquid impervious backsheet, an absorbent core positioned between the topsheet and the backsheet, and an attachment means provided on the wearer-facing surface of the disposable assembly;

- a waist belt having two end edges oppositely disposed with respect to the transverse centerline, and two side edges oppositely disposed with respect to the longitudinal centerline, the belt comprising a central segment, at least two intermediate segments and at least two distal segments;

- the central segment being positioned along the longitudinal centerline and extending transversely outwardly from the longitudinal centerline ~~in~~ on either side of the longitudinal centerline, the central segment having a first longitudinal length defined by the distance between the end edges of the central segment;

- each intermediate segment transversely outwardly extending from the central segment and being positioned between the central segment and a distal segment, each intermediate segment covering a side hip of the wearer when the belt is worn, each intermediate segment having a second longitudinal length defined by the distance between the end edges of each intermediate segment;

- each distal segment extending transversely outwardly from an intermediate segment and including one of the side edges of the belt, each distal segment having a third longitudinal length defined by the distance between the end edges of each distal segment;

wherein the second longitudinal length is greater than the first longitudinal length, and greater than the third longitudinal length; and

wherein the belt comprises a fastener element positioned on at least one of the distal segments for releasably securing the belt around the waist of the wearer, and an attachment surface formed at least on the opposing surface of each intermediate segment of the belt such that

the attachment surface is complementary to the attachment means for releasably attaching the disposable assembly to the belt.

7. (Original) An absorbent article according Claim 7 wherein the second longitudinal length of the intermediate segment is between 100 mm and 250 mm if the belt is designed for adult wearers.

8. (Original) An absorbent article according Claim 7 wherein the second longitudinal length of the intermediate segment is between 50 mm and 100 mm if the belt is designed for infant wearers.